



The Right Stuff

Story by MG Charles S. Mahan Jr.



As the Army transforms into a lighter force, it must enhance its agility, deployability, responsiveness and versatility while ensuring lethality, survivability and efficient, effective sustainment. Achieving these goals means that soldiers will need different and lighter equipment.

The transformation objective is to field “a force that is strategically responsive and dominant at every point on the spectrum of operations.” The new transformation brigades are the current focus of the Army’s attention.

To create the new brigades, the Army Materiel Command in Alexandria, Va., is working closely with Training and Doctrine Command at Fort Monroe, Va.

AMC is also working with the assistant secretary of the Army for

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(Left and above) Among its other missions, AMC is the storage facility for the Airdrop Operations Program which supports contingency or emergency operations within the U.S. Army Pacific Command.

for a Transforming Army

acquisition, logistics and technology to discover research, development and acquisition ideas and to increase logistics efficiency.

In its support of the Army's transformation effort, AMC is focusing on reducing the current logistical footprint; finding better and more responsive ways to deliver materiel by air, sea and prepositioned assets; and working with industry to provide soldiers with the technological "overmatch" to ensure battlefield success. That "overmatch" also means making equipment that is lighter, more easily deployable and more reliable.

The key to changes in the new logistics will come from a synergy of several skills inherent to AMC.

For example, the command buys, ships and stores the nation's ammunition stockpile. To get a smaller, more efficient logistical footprint, AMC is exploring ways to make better ammunition with a higher first-round kill probability and to develop weapons around common calibers that meet the needs of a wide variety of missions.

The more accurate the ammunition and the fewer number of calibers used, the fewer tons of ammunition required to be manufactured, stored and moved to the battlefield to get the job done.

New armored vehicles could enhance deployability and help reduce logistical-support needs. Such vehicles must be lighter, low-profile platforms that provide ballistic protection, target acquisition and first-round kills.

Lighter vehicles also reduce fuel consumption. Relying on a family of battlefield platforms based on a common chassis would also reduce logistics requirements by decreasing



AMC now manages seven sets of heavy-brigade equipment that is prepositioned around the world — forward deployed both on the ground and aboard ships at sea.

the number of parts the Army needs.

Today, the logistics "tail" represents the majority of the Army's deployment lift requirements. To reduce the personnel and materiel assets that have to be deployed, the Army is looking for alternative means of providing combat support and combat service support.

Contractors working with AMC at intermediate staging bases will provide logistical and combat support, including maintaining and storing equipment and materiel. Ideally, these staging

bases will be set up out of harm's way but close enough to provide support faster and farther forward on the battlefield. Host-nation support is another asset close to the battlefield that must be exploited to improve logistical support to the soldier.

In addition, AMC will become the Army's central point of contact for optimizing "buy, repair, stock and distribution" decisions. Part of the transformation will mean reconfiguring logistics and flattening the support structure to help speed

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response to field commanders' requirements so they go through fewer layers of management to get what they need.

AMC also is adding more logistics assistance representatives in the field to work directly with soldiers, helping them with maintenance and supply problems and assisting them with challenges resulting from the proliferation of more numerous — and more complex — battlefield systems.

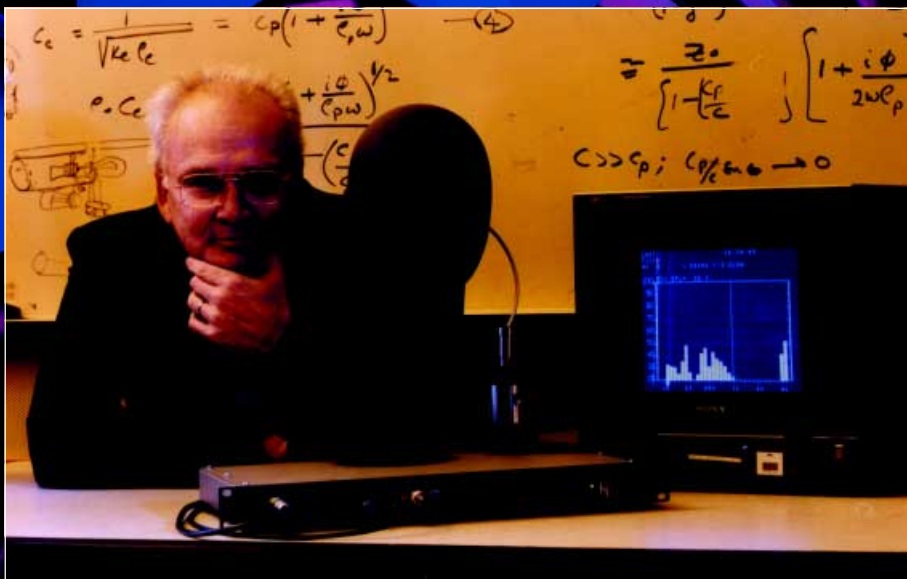
AMC will have a more

accurate, closer to real-time view of all of the Army's assets. Information technology will make it possible to track Army inventory — whether it's in a stock room, at a depot, or on a ship, plane or truck — and help AMC react quickly, locating and getting the right equipment and supplies to the right place at the right time.

The Army's transformation will mean new equipment; reconfiguring some of its combat, combat support and combat service support forces; and restructuring some of the Army's

logistical infrastructure. AMC will continue in its role as the Army's integrator of research, development, acquisition and logistical support to the soldier.

And so in the future, the right stuff will mean lighter stuff that lets soldiers get to the fight faster but with the staying power that makes the Army the dominant land force in the world. Helping create that power is the Army Materiel Command — focused on readiness for today and tomorrow. □



AMC is working to harness the technologies that will meet the Army's needs both now and into the future.